



Maricopa County

News Release

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Labor Day Feast for Mosquitoes

This Labor Day weekend Maricopa County residents will be spending it outdoors barbecuing, camping, and boating around the Valley. With so many people outside, mosquitoes will be enjoying the holiday feasting, as well. Before heading outdoors, the Maricopa County Department of Public Health and the Environmental Services Department would like to remind people to take precautions against West Nile Virus.

“Consider the holiday a human buffet for mosquitoes,” said Dr. Jonathan Weisbuch, Director of the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. “Humans aren’t the only ones who love the food on the Labor Day. If you don’t protect yourselves, the mosquitoes will definitely make a meal of you.”

Because many citizens will outdoors over this Labor Day, please remember to wear insect repellant containing DEET, and if possible, wear light colored clothes with long sleeves and pants. Also, if you are spending the day at home, be sure to get rid of all standing water and anything within which mosquitoes might breed. Finally, if you decide to go camping over the weekend, your best bet would be to use a screened tent, camper or automobile at night.

“Wherever you go this weekend, bring your DEET along and share it with the people around you,” said Al Brown, Director of Maricopa County Environmental Services Department. “If you have the opportunity to protect someone else, take it. Your thoughtfulness could save lives.”

So far this year, Maricopa County Department of Public Health has received laboratory-confirmation of 304 human cases of West Nile, including four deaths.

Prevention is the best tool we have. There is no vaccine for WNV, and treatment will only relieve your symptoms. As you are out this weekend remember: You are your best protection against West Nile Virus.

Take these precautions to prevent WNV infection:

- Eliminate mosquito-breeding sites around the home by removing standing water in potted plants, tires and other containers.
- Repair window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out of the home.

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- Avoid outdoor activity before dawn and after dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- When outdoors wear long sleeves and long pants to prevent mosquito bites.
- When outdoors wear a mosquito repellant containing DEET (follow label instructions, especially for use on children).

More information on West Nile Virus can be found on the Maricopa County website at <http://www.maricopa.gov/wnv> or by calling the Public Health WNV Information line at (602) 747-7500 and the West Nile Virus General Information and Help Line at (602) 506-0700.

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